

Roger credits his *The Last Time I Saw Paris* co-star Elizabeth Taylor (right) as the most beautiful of all his co-stars – sorry Bond girls!



ROGER MOORE REVEALS

"I'M ONE LUCKY MAN!"

The former James Bond looks back on his stellar career as he heads for the big 9-0

Sir Roger Moore may be nearly 90, but to James Bond fans, he's still the dashing movie star who charmed us as secret agent 007.

Don't offer him a 'shaken, not stirred' martini though.

'I have diabetes – alcohol is out,' the debonair Brit tells *New Idea* from his home in Switzerland.

But health setbacks aside, Roger, 87, is a bundle of energy and a witty storyteller.

Despite the beautiful women and exotic locations in his seven Bond movies, playing 007 was 'never as glamorous as it looks', Roger tells *New Idea*.

'You'd be on a tropical isle, and everyone else is wearing shorts in the steamy heat, not having to jump around in designer suits. Poor old Bond has to leap off cliffs and not even look sweaty. I'd have to change my shirt 65 times a day to keep looking immaculate!'

He's just penned a memoir, *Last Man Standing: Tales From Tinseltown*, about his life as a movie star, name-dropping his very impressive famous friends along the way.

Of all the gorgeous women he's worked with, Elizabeth Taylor was the most beautiful, he says. 'Those extraordinary violet

eyes! When you looked into them, you'd be tempted to give her whatever she wanted.' But getting her to turn up on set on time was a headache. 'She had the reputation of not wanting to go to work unless the producer brought her a present!' he reveals.

His great pal Frank Sinatra, he says, was 'a generous soul, often misunderstood with all that talk of Mafia links', while David Niven was his favourite actor. 'He was a great raconteur and one of my closest friends. His death was the one that upset me the most.'

'It was hard to take, especially seeing him suffer so much towards the end. He was the

reason I moved to Switzerland in about 1970, to avoid paying the crippling taxes in Britain. We'd visited David at his chateau there once and he'd told me: "Your kids will love it over here. They can go to school in the morning and ski in the afternoon."

'The kids did become great skiers. But I was never allowed to do downward skiing, as I was always under contract and it was seen to be too dangerous. By the time I decided I was going to do it, I had a fear of heights! My kids are embarrassed at the way I ski.'

These days, Roger lives a quiet life with Kristina Tholstrup, his Swedish wife of 12 years, who ▶

he controversially fell for while still married to wife number three, Luisa Mattioli.

'She really looks after me,' he says of his great love. 'We're like your Kylie and Jason!'

'She makes me breakfast in bed every morning. I'm a very lucky man.'

'The marmalade is sugar-free of course, because of the diabetes. It is a bit of a bore getting older. Shall I tell you about my back and my knees?'

Now that Roger's close to 90, he adds with a giggle: 'Everybody around me looks young.'

'Whenever my kids say something, I think: "Ooh, that's very smart for someone so young," then I remember they're actually in their 40s!'

Other than writing books, Roger still enjoys his role as a UNICEF goodwill ambassador.

'I've been with them for 23 years,' he says with pride.

It was the late Audrey Hepburn, deeply involved with the organisation, who persuaded him to join. 'And I'm so grateful that she did. It's changed my life.'

Starring as James Bond in the world's most exotic locations, where the disparity between wealth and poverty was extreme, helped stir his social conscience.

'I'd be at these beautiful places, staying at fine hotels, but if you looked around, you'd see how desperately poor many locals were.'

Debate has raged for decades as to who played the better Bond: him or Sir Sean Connery – so who does Roger think was best?

'Sean!' he declares. 'He was the first to do it and had the quality that [author] Ian Fleming had in mind. When I took over Bond, there were some absurd rumours that I was Fleming's choice – nonsense, he'd been dead for seven years!'

Deciding there was no point in copying Sean's macho style, Roger opted to play a more light-hearted secret agent.

'I took it to the other extreme. I said I didn't think he could be much of a spy if everyone knew him, knew that he liked his martinis shaken, not stirred! I mean, how seriously can you take a guy who introduces himself as "Bond, James Bond"?!'

Despite the ravages of age, Roger says he's never felt more content. 'I did want to call this new book *One Lucky Bastard*, because that's me! It's what the book is called in America. But in the UK [and Australia], it had to be called *Last Man Standing: Tales From Tinseltown*. Go figure!'

By Jacqui Lang **NI**

Last Man Standing: Tales From Tinseltown by Roger Moore (Michael O'Mara, \$39.95) is out now. A percentage of sales goes to UNICEF.

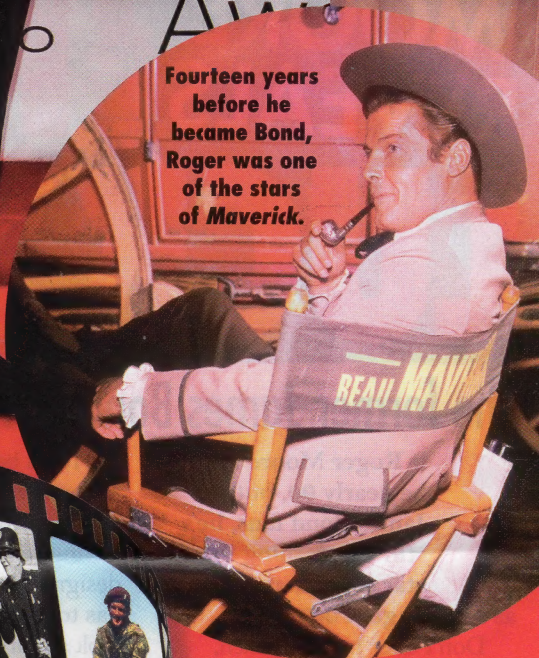
ROGER MOORE
LAST MAN STANDING
TALES FROM TINSELTOWN



Roger calls fourth wife Kristina, who he wed 12 years ago, his 'favourite Bond girl'.



Fourteen years before he became Bond, Roger was one of the stars of *Maverick*.



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